
**COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE;
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

SMITH-LEVER SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT – FY 2008

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under **10.500**.

DATES: Applications must be received by close of business (COB) on **May 28, 2008 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time)**.

CSREES often issues requests for applications (RFAs) that contain information divided in eight parts. All information in the eight parts is not necessary for requesting applications for these funds, however, the unnecessary parts are included herein and are denoted by “Reserved,” in order to maintain the overall RFA structure for reference to RFAs by other documents.

PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

Section 3(b) & (c) of the Smith–Lever Act, as amended through Public Law 107-293, authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Administrator of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), to conduct competitive grant programs to State Extension Services at 1862 Land-Grant Institutions to support innovative, education-based approaches to addressing emergency preparedness and specific responses related to natural and man-made disasters.

B. Purpose and Priorities

There has been an increase in public awareness regarding the number and severity of critical incidents involving earthquakes, tsunamis, tornadoes, wildfire, drought, contagious disease, and terrorist events. Recent reports from sources such as the *Journal of Extension*, the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, and the Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction of the National Science and Technology Council seek to address these growing public concerns by pointing out the many roles that Cooperative Extension System (CES) plays in disaster preparedness and remediation.

The CES has repeatedly served to help enable families, communities, and businesses to successfully respond to and cope with critical incidents through science-based communication, education, facilitation, and information dissemination. Two basic mechanisms: dispersal of science-based information; and facilitation of holistic preparation and planning efforts provide CES with the tools to enable communities and businesses to respond to critical incidents. Never was this more evident than after hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma in 2005, when local

Extension agents served as a critical communication node throughout the affected rural areas, particularly when normal communication systems were temporarily overwhelmed or destroyed.

The Smith-Lever Special Needs (Special Needs) Program has a history of providing the CES with resources to support innovative approaches to addressing risks, hazards and disasters. During disasters and emergency situations, rapid recovery and reestablishment of local and regional CES services, including educational activities, and outreach services are integral parts of CES disaster recovery. The goals and purpose of the Smith-Lever Special Needs Program are consistent with those of the [2007 Strategic Opportunities for Cooperative Extension](#) as published by the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC). This program assists communities, families and individuals to become more self-sustaining by strengthening and increasing their resiliency in response to uncertainties caused by losses of economic infrastructure, severe weather, human or animal diseases or security breaches. CSREES intends to fund projects to implement applied scientific programs that serve public needs in preparation for, during and after emergency situations within impacted States and across impacted regions. Special Needs will also fund the development of educational programs and demonstration activities focusing on disaster preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery. The Special Needs Program supports education and extension activities which:

1. Reduce risk through planning, disaster preparedness and emergency response by improving communication between the public, community leaders, state and Federal agencies;
2. Develop strategies for emergency planning, infrastructure design and recovery operation; and
3. Develop community networks that provide real-time disaster education information.

The purpose of the Special Needs Program is to support continued education and extension program development in disaster preparedness that will increase knowledge and understanding of rural communities regarding their vulnerabilities to critical incidents; and increasing their capacity for disaster response, thus reducing citizen and community shock and stress. Working with local governments, communities, families, and businesses, effective Special Needs projects will help citizens, families and communities achieve resiliency following a disaster. When applied to disaster preparedness, this integrated approach is referred to as "vulnerability science". Specific focus areas for applied scientific work in vulnerability science could include, for example:

1. The effects of economic structure, governance, and family systems on the potential for resiliency;
2. Identification of cost-effective communication methods to successfully alert and evacuate people;
3. Preparation of vulnerable communities for emergency response and disaster recovery; and
4. Identification of effective coping strategies for families, communities, and businesses.

Priority will be given to applications that bring timely CES engagement to bear on specific human needs related to emergency response and recovery, individual safety, and personal/public health and well-being. Consideration will also be given to applications that support education and service activities that will help provide and support local recovery efforts for impacted rural communities, schools, businesses and agriculture-based activities.

Applicants may refer to examples of already existing strengths which could be built upon. The Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) has developed a significant web-based information system <http://www.eden.lsu.edu/> for sharing disaster preparedness and response information. EDEN is also the primary contributor to the recently launched eXtension Disaster Community of Practice <http://www.extension.org/disasters> whose initial offering focuses on Agrosecurity and Floods. EDEN presently offers six online learning opportunities for targeted audiences

http://www.extension.org/pages/Extension_Disaster_Education_Network_Learning_Lessons.

Some of these web-based courses are completed independently online, others are resources for Extension educators to teach in person and some offer both options.

C. Program Area Description

For the purposes of this request for applications (RFA), the **PROGRAM NAME** is **ESNP SPECIAL NEEDS** and the **PROGRAM CODE** is **MB**.

In evaluating applications for Special Needs funds, CSREES will weigh the need for preparation, the disaster risks involved, and potential losses; and support projects that demonstrate the potential for the greatest impacts and widest benefits in addressing existing and future emergency situations within states and across regions. Fundable projects could range from educational activities that enhance emergency preparedness to post-disaster programs and relief activities that specifically address crisis situations. Timely post-disaster engagement could involve the procurement of critical items and inventory needed for rapid recovery and reestablishment of essential local Extension engagement.

For fiscal year (FY) 2008, the Special Needs Program encourages applications that specifically address the following five key target areas:

1. **Education and Technical assistance** through inter-disciplinary and multi-state disaster training programs and demonstration projects for problem solving, especially those which build upon already existing strengths, contribute to or expand the EDEN and/or eXtension educational materials related to disaster preparation, mitigation, response and recovery;
2. **Collaboration** with Federal, state and local agencies and other disaster relief organizations to support education and service activities that enhance recovery of impacted rural communities, schools, businesses and agricultural-based activities;
3. **Long range family, community and regional planning** projects that will enhance implementation of programs that serve public needs in preparation for, during and after emergency situations within impacted States and across impacted regions;
4. **Communication delivery** of key information that meets end-users' needs in a timely fashion with consideration of potentially limited communication channels due to disaster situations; and
5. **Dissemination of credible, science-based information** that is easily reliable and accessible even if electronic access is compromised.

PART II – AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular grant application or to make a specific number of awards. CSREES anticipates approximately \$460,000 will be available to support Special Needs applications in FY 2008.

B. Type of Application

In FY 2008, applications may be submitted to the Special Needs Program as new or resubmitted applications, as described below:

1. **New application.** This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the Special Needs Program. All new applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.
2. **Resubmitted application.** This is an application that had previously been submitted to the Special Needs Program but not funded. Project Directors (PDs) must respond to the previous review panel summary. Resubmitted applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in appropriate area to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted by Extension Directors of 1862 Land-grant Institutions in the 50 states, American Samoa, Guam, Micronesia, Northern Marianas, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project.

An applicant's failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of an application deadline will result in CSREES returning the application without review or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude CSREES from making an award.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

Pursuant to rules and policies governing Section 3(b) & (c) of the Smith–Lever Act, as amended through Public Law 107-293, no allotment shall be made to a State under subsection (b) or (c), and no payments from the allotment shall be made to a State, in excess of the amount that the State makes available out of non-Federal funds for cooperative extension work.

1. To comply with the matching requirements of the Special Needs Program, applicants are required to provide 100 percent matching funds from non-federal sources for all proposed federal funds sought in the application. In-kind and third party contributions are not allowed for this program. Grant awards cannot be issued until ALL required matching has been documented and verified (see Part IV, B.5. SF 424 (R&R) Budget Fed & Non-Fed and Field K-Budget Justification, for additional details).
2. Matching Alternative.— Extension Directors may certify an offset of guaranteed non-Federal funds to your application. The signed certification of offset must be scanned and included as a PDF attachment (see Part IV(B)2(b)1 for specific instructions).
3. Matching Exception.— Insular Areas: In lieu of the matching funds requirement, the insular areas of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands of the United States shall provide matching funds from non-Federal sources in an amount equal to not less than 50 percent of the grants awarded. The Secretary may waive this matching fund requirement for any fiscal year if the Secretary determines that the government of the insular area will be unlikely to meet the matching requirement for the fiscal year. Insular applicants may submit a waiver request as a PDF attachment to the application (see Part IV(B)2(b)2 for specific instructions).

PART IV – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Application Package

The steps to access application materials are as follows:

1. Download and install PureEdge Viewer, a small, free program that provides access to the grant application. See http://www.grants.gov/resources/download_software.jsp#pureedge.
2. The application package must be obtained via Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov>, click on “Apply for Grants” in the left-hand column, click on “Step 1: [Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions](#),” enter the funding opportunity number **USDA-CSREES-SLBCD-001505** in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, click “Download” to access the application package.

Contained within the application package is the “CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.” This Guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

If assistance is needed to access the application package (e.g., downloading or navigating PureEdge forms, using PureEdge with a Macintosh computer), refer to resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://grants.gov/>). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

- Grants.gov customer support
Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726
Business Hours: M-F 7:00 am – 9:00 pm Eastern Time
Email: support@grants.gov

See <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html> for additional resources for applying electronically.

C. Content and Form of Application Submission

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to CSREES in response to this RFA.

Prior to preparing an application, it is suggested that the PD/PI first contact an Authorized Representative (AR)(also referred to as Authorized Organizational Representative or AOR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grant.gov. If the organization is not prepared, the AOR should see http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp for steps for preparing to submit applications through Grants.gov.

Applications should be prepared following Parts IV, V, and VI of the document entitled [“CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.”](#) This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is **additional information** needed in order to prepare an application in response to this RFA. If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.

Note the attachment requirements (e.g., portable document format) in Part III section 3. of the Guide. ANY PROPOSALS CONTAINING NON-PDF DOCUMENTS WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM CSREES REVIEW. Partial applications will be excluded from CSREES review. With documented prior approval, resubmitted applications will be accepted until close of business on the agreed upon date.

1. SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 2. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

- a. Field 20. Pre-application – Do not fill out this portion of the form.

2. R&R Other Project Information

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 3. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

- a. Field 7. Project Narrative – **PDF Attachment.** The Project Narrative shall not exceed ten pages, including figures and tables.

Applicants should provide the following program specific information in their Project Narratives:

- (1) **Introduction:** Include information on the following in the order identified:
 - i. Summarize the work to be performed in non-technical terms;
 - ii. Concisely state the goal(s) of the proposed project;
 - iii. Describe how this project will build upon or expand related work or programs;
 - iv. Describe how the work on this project relates to the experience of key project personnel;
 - v. Describe the involvement of stakeholders in developing project objectives and implementing results; and
 - vi. Define the target audience and end users of this project.
- (2) **Objectives:**
 - i. Provide a brief review of the goal(s) stated in the Introduction; and
 - ii. Present a clear, concise set of project objectives.
- (3) **Methods: Describe the procedures by objective for the proposed effort, include:**
 - i. Techniques and methods to be employed, including their feasibility and rationale for their use in this project; and
 - ii. Timeline for proposed research with milestones and verifiable indicators, which demonstrate progress.

b. Other Attachments (Field 11. on the Form) – PDF Attachment

- (1) **Certification of Offset.** The application must contain a certification of offset signed by the Extension Director scanned into PDF format. A valid certification of offset must include the following:
 - i. Institution Name
 - ii. Detailed list containing the amount of guaranteed funds derived from non-Federal sources that are available and budgeted for expenditure for cooperative extension work in accordance with the provisions of the Smith-Lever Act of May 8, 1914, and amendments, thereto.
 1. Sources and Amounts:
 - a. State Appropriation
 - b. County Appropriation
 - c. Non-tax funds
 - d. Total Guaranteed Funds
 - iii. Extension Directors must further certify that the above reported non-Federal funds are in addition to those used in matching other Federal funds; that if any portion of the money thus guaranteed is not received from sources shown above, the State Cooperative Extension Service will either make up this deficiency from other non-Federal sources which may become available or report at the end of the fiscal year 2008 an equivalent unobligated balance of Federal funds derived from appropriations under the Act above mentioned, which will be deducted from the award amount.

- iv. Additionally, Extension Directors must certify that there has been satisfactory progress during fiscal year 2008 on the cooperative extension programs authorized under sections 3(b) and (c) of the Smith-Lever Act; that the expenditures of Federal funds for the support of these programs were in accordance with the laws and regulations governing their use; and that non-Federal matching (offset) funds have been obligated in accordance with the requirement.
- (2) **Waiver Request.** In lieu of the matching funds requirement, the insular areas of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands of the United States may attach a waiver request to the application. Waiver requests must clearly demonstrate that the government of the insular area will be unlikely to meet the matching requirement for the fiscal year.
- (3) **Appendices to Project Description.** Appendices to the Project Description may be attached if they are directly germane to the proposed project. The addition of appendices should not be used to circumvent the text and/or figures and tables page limitations.

3. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 4. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide. A Senior/Key Person Profile should be completed for the PD/PI and each co-PD/PI, senior associate, and other professional personnel.

Also, **you must attach** “Current and Pending Support” information. See CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide, Part 4.3 for guidelines and information format for each senior/key person identified. **Note: Even if no funding is currently reported under the “Active” section of this attachment, you must still list information for this grant application under the “Pending” section of this attachment for each senior/key person identified.**

4. R&R Personal Data – As noted in Part V, 5., the submission of this information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award. If completing the information, **do not enter any data in the field requesting the social security number.**

5. SF 424 (R&R) Budget Fed & Non-Fed

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 6., of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide. This form (accompanied by the required Budget Justification attachment (see Field K on the Form)) contains the itemized listing and description of your project’s budget. Applicants must complete one SF 424 (R&R) Budget Fed & Non-Fed Form for each 12-month period, plus a cumulative budget form for the entire project.

6. Supplemental Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part VI, 1. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

- a. Program Code (Field 2. on the Form). Enter the program code name **ESNP SPECIAL NEEDS** and the program code **MB**.

- b. Conflict of Interest List (Field 8. on the Form). A conflict of interest list is not required under this program. Do not include a conflict of interest list.

C. Submission Date and Time

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, 1.9 of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

Applications must be received by close of business (COB) on **May 28, 2008 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time)**. Applications received after this date will not normally be considered for funding.

Correspondence regarding submitted applications will be sent using e-mail. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide accurate e-mail addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AR of the institution that submitted the application has not received correspondence **from CSREES** regarding a submitted application within 30 days of submission of the application, please contact the Agency Contact (see Part VII) and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in a delay in the issuance of an award. Once the application has been assigned a proposal number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.**

D. Funding Restrictions

Indirect costs and tuition remission are unallowable and no funds will be approved for these purposes. Costs that are a part of the institution's indirect cost pool may not be reclassified as direct costs for the purpose of making them allowable.

E. Other Submission Requirements

The applicant should follow the submission requirements noted in the document entitled "A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov."

PART V – APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. through C. – Reserved.

D. Organizational Management Information

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted on a one time basis, with updates on an as needed basis, as part of the responsibility determination prior to the award of a grant identified under this RFA, if such information has not been provided previously under this or another CSREES program. CSREES will provide copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the preaward process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, there are factors which may exclude an applicant from receiving Federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits under this

program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

PART VI – AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

The date specified by the awarding official of CSREES as the effective date of the grant shall be no later than September 30 of the Federal fiscal year in which the project is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. It should be noted that the project need not be initiated on the grant effective date, but as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds granted by CSREES under this RFA shall be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, the regulations, the terms and conditions of the award, the applicable Federal cost principles, and the Department's assistance regulations (parts 3015 and 3019 of 7 CFR).

B. Award Notice

The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum, the following:

1. Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to whom the Administrator has issued an award under the terms of this request for applications;
2. Title of project;
3. Name(s) and institution(s) of PDs chosen to direct and control approved activities;
4. Identifying award number assigned by the Department;
5. Project period, specifying the amount of time the Department intends to support the project without requiring recompetition for funds;
6. Total amount of Departmental financial assistance approved by the Administrator during the project period;
7. Legal authority(ies) under which the award is issued;
8. Appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
9. Applicable award terms and conditions (see <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> to view CSREES award terms and conditions);
10. Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the award; and

11. Other information or provisions deemed necessary by CSREES to carry out its respective awarding activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular award.

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Several Federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to project grants awarded under this program. These include, but are not limited to:

7 CFR Part 1, subpart A—USDA implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

7 CFR Part 3—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-129 regarding debt collection.

7 CFR Part 15, subpart A—USDA implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

7 CFR Part 331 and 9 CFR Part 121—USDA implementation of the Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002.

7 CFR Part 3015—USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, implementing OMB directives (i.e., OMB Circular Nos. A-21 and A-122, now codified at 2 CFR Parts 220 and 230) and incorporating provisions of 31 U.S.C. 6301-6308 (formerly the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, Pub. L. No. 95-224), as well as general policy requirements applicable to recipients of Departmental financial assistance.

7 CFR Part 3017—USDA implementation of Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and 7 CFR Part 3021—Governmentwide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Grants).

7 CFR Part 3018—USDA implementation of Restrictions on Lobbying. Imposes prohibitions and requirements for disclosure and certification related to lobbying on recipients of Federal contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and loans.

7 CFR Part 3019—USDA implementation of OMB Circular A-110, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3052—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-profit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3407—CSREES procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

29 U.S.C. 794 (section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and 7 CFR Part 15b (USDA implementation of statute) —prohibiting discrimination based upon physical or mental handicap in Federally assisted programs.

35 U.S.C. 200 et seq. —Bayh Dole Act, controlling allocation of rights to inventions made by employees of small business firms and domestic nonprofit organizations, including universities, in Federally assisted programs (implementing regulations are contained in 37 CFR Part 401).

D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

Grantees are also required to submit initial project information and annual and summary reports to CSREES' Current Research Information System (CRIS). The CRIS database contains narrative project information, progress/impact statements, and final technical reports that are made available to the public. For applications recommended for funding, instructions on preparation and submission of project documentation will be provided to the applicant by the agency contact. **Documentation must be submitted to CRIS before CSREES funds will be released.** Project reports will be requested by the CRIS office when required. For more information about CRIS, visit <http://cris.csrees.usda.gov>.

PART VII – AGENCY CONTACT

The agency contact is Dennis D. Kopp; Assistant Administrator for Program and Analysis; Cooperative State Research, Education, & Extension Service; telephone: 202-690-0745; fax: 202-720-8987; e-mail: dkopp@csrees.usda.gov.

PARTS VIII – Reserved.